

## How to approach your first 90 days

### Squiggle with success...

Squiggly careers are full of change and choice and many of us will be looking at new roles in the not-too-distant future.

Being able to start with clarity and confidence helps you to adapt fast and make an impact quickly.



"Look forward and work backwards." - Michael Watkins

### Transition traps

- 🔗 **Sticking with what you know**  
It's harder to open up career possibilities by doing the same things you did in your previous role
- 🔗 **Prioritising action over learning**  
Being too busy to learn new things in your new role limits your ability to grow in the long-term
- 🔗 **Neglecting cross-functional relationships**  
Spending time with people other than your manager helps build up your support network.



### Ideas for action

#### 1. Where to focus first

##### Accelerate your learning

Don't get distracted by a desire to do. Instead, use these 90 days to be a Learn it All who learns a lot! Set a learning plan to cover: People, Projects, Process.

##### Quick Wins

Identify 1-2 situations that would benefit from your strengths and put yourself forward to be part of them. This helps people to see you at your best.

##### Spot your supporters

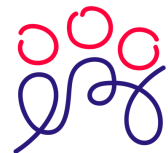
Assess who has influence and is likely to support you. Observe potential opponents and adapt your approach to pre-empt any problems.

#### 2. Mutual work win

The 'onboarding' process' is an important way to help people transition into your team.

The faster your new colleagues get up to speed, the more effectively everyone can work (including you!)

- 🔗 **1. Welcome warmly**  
Your early interactions help individuals feel that you care.
- 🔗 **2. Clarify expectations**  
This can help individuals focus their efforts and energy.
- 🔗 **3. Approach as a coach**  
Build their confidence so that they can help themselves.



### Coach yourself questions

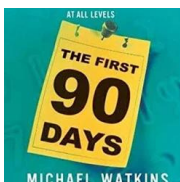
How would you want people to describe you at the end of your first 90 days?



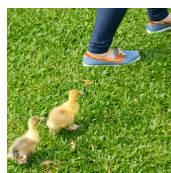
What do you want to be true at the end of your first 90 days that isn't true today?



### Recommended resources



**The First 90 days**  
by Michael D. Watkins



**How to quit when you leave a team**  
HBR article by Peter Fennah, Brenda Steinberg, and Michael D. Watkins



**How to leave well**  
Squiggly Careers episode #50